

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Response from VA San Diego Healthcare System Director  
From: "Butler, Cynthia C." <Cynthia.Butler@va.gov>  
Date: 2/21/19, 8:33 AM  
To: Jill Castellano <jillcastellano@inewssource.org>, Brad Racino  
<bradracino@inewssource.org>

Hello Jill and Brad – Here is our statement. Please attribute the statement to me, Cindy Butler, VA San Diego Healthcare System PAO.

VA is aware of these issues. That's why the department's Office of the Medical Inspector is gathering facts for a supplemental report to its initial one completed July 10, 2017.

VA is unable to comment further until the completion of this supplemental report.

Thanks,

**Cindy C. Butler, RD, MBA, APR**

Public Affairs Director | VA San Diego Healthcare System  
Office: (858) 552-4373 | [Cynthia.butler@va.gov](mailto:Cynthia.butler@va.gov)  
[www. Sandiego.va.gov](http://www.Sandiego.va.gov)

**From:** Jill Castellano [mailto:jillcastellano@inewssource.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 19, 2019 4:09 PM  
**To:** Brad Racino <bradracino@inewssource.org>  
**Cc:** Butler, Cynthia C. <Cynthia.Butler@va.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Response from VA San Diego Healthcare System Director

Hi Cindy,

I left you a voicemail earlier today to mention something else we wanted to bring up to you. We reached out to Dr. Bernd Schnabl, the principle investigator on the study, and he said we should go through you to arrange an interview with him. We'd like to set up a time to speak with him about the study sometime soon, and our schedules are pretty flexible.

Could you help us set this up? This is in addition to the other responses you are tracking down. You can reach me at 914-629-1750.

Thank you,  
Jill Castellano

On Tue, Feb 19, 2019 at 9:38 AM Brad Racino <[bradracino@inewssource.org](mailto:bradracino@inewssource.org)> wrote:

Thank you Cynthia.

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Butler, Cynthia C.

February 19, 2019 at 7:43 AM

Hi Brad – I am still working on a response. Will get back with you asap.

**Cindy C. Butler, RD, MBA, APR**

Public Affairs Director | VA San Diego Healthcare System

Office: (858) 552-4373 | [Cynthia.butler@va.gov](mailto:Cynthia.butler@va.gov)

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**From:** Brad Racino [<mailto:bradracino@inewssource.org>]

**Sent:** Monday, February 18, 2019 8:24 AM

**To:** Butler, Cynthia C. <[Cynthia.Butler@va.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Butler@va.gov)>

**Cc:** Jill Castellano <[jillcastellano@inewssource.org](mailto:jillcastellano@inewssource.org)>

**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Response from VA San Diego Healthcare System Director

Good morning Cynthia,

I wanted to follow up on this to request an update?

Thank you for your help.

-Brad

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**BRAD RACINO** | Senior Reporter & Assistant Director

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Brad Racino

February 18, 2019 at 8:23 AM

Good morning Cynthia,

I wanted to follow up on this to request an update?

Thank you for your help.

-Brad

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[Butler, Cynthia C.](#)

February 15, 2019 at 7:34 AM

I am working on a response. Will be back in touch as soon as possible.

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**From:** Brad Racino [<mailto:bradracino@inewssource.org>]

**Sent:** Thursday, February 14, 2019 2:03 PM

**To:** Butler, Cynthia C. <[Cynthia.Butler@va.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Butler@va.gov)>

**Cc:** Jill Castellano <[jillcastellano@inewssource.org](mailto:jillcastellano@inewssource.org)>

**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Response from VA San Diego Healthcare System Director

Hi Cynthia,

Happy rainy Thursday! Jill and I would like to request an interview with either Dr. Smith, Dr. William Penny, or anyone else most knowledgeable about the Ho/Schnabl research protocol and resulting investigations.

The reason is that our research and interviews have found a variety of discrepancies between the OMI reports, the October 2018 VA IRB report and the project leader's recollections (Ramon Bataller) related to this project. These discrepancies range from the number of patients that participated, when the study ended and why it ended to the severity of informed consent violations, how samples were used and harm to subjects.

We have all this information organized and would like to sit down with someone to go over the discrepancies, one by one, to nail down what is true and accurate.

Would you please help arrange this? We'd appreciate it.

Thank you in advance,

-Brad

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**BRAD RACINO** | Senior Reporter & Assistant Director

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[Brad Racino](#)

February 14, 2019 at 2:02 PM

Hi Cynthia,

Happy rainy Thursday! Jill and I would like to request an interview with either Dr. Smith, Dr. William Penny, or anyone else most knowledgeable about the Ho/Schnabl research protocol and resulting investigations.

The reason is that our research and interviews have found a variety of discrepancies between the OMI reports, the October 2018 VA IRB report and the project leader's recollections (Ramon Bataller) related to this project. These discrepancies range from the number of patients that participated, when the study ended and why it ended to the severity of informed consent violations, how samples were used and harm to subjects.

We have all this information organized and would like to sit down with someone to go over the discrepancies, one by one, to nail down what is true and accurate.

Would you please help arrange this? We'd appreciate it.

Thank you in advance,

-Brad

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[Brad Racino](#)

November 26, 2018 at 1:05 PM

Thank you Cynthia.

Butler, Cynthia C. wrote on 11/26/18 1:03 PM:

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**BRAD RACINO** | Senior Reporter & Assistant Director

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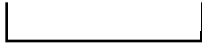
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Jill Castellano  
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Phone: (914) 629-1750  
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PGP: [Public Key](#)



—Attachments:—

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